

16 South Corridor Development Plan

Introduction

“You can see it from here”, has a great deal of significance and meaning for several reasons. The development of the new segment of the NC 16 Bypass has made it possible to see the skyline of the City of Charlotte in a dramatic way. It also serves as a constant reminder of our close proximity to one of the top 10 fastest growing cities in the U.S. over the last decade. It brings the southern portion of Catawba County within the range of the average U.S. commute time (24.3 minutes) to a major metropolitan area offering multi-modal transportation facilities, financial, cultural, and sports centers.

Just as there are many benefits and attractions to living, working, and playing in the Charlotte area, the southern portion of Catawba County also has much to offer such as:

16 South Corridor Development Plan

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- Abundance of farm land and open space
- Rural and low density development
- Scenic viewsheds
- Quality education system
- Competitive land prices
- Availability of cost effective public utilities



NC 16 Bypass South of Anderson Mountain

The opening of NC 16 Bypass places this area of Catawba County in a better position to attract economic development. Locating within this area of Catawba County offers businesses an attractive alternative to the congested Charlotte metropolitan area.

Over the past 15 years, Catawba County has adopted/accepted long-range planning initiatives for the purpose of providing the framework for coordinated growth and development. These plans included a county-wide comprehen-

sive plan, referred to as VisionQuest 2010 (1996) and smaller focused plans referred to as “Small Area Plans” (SAP). The two plans associated with the NC 16 corridor are Sherrills Ford SAP (February 2003) and Balls Creek SAP (June 2003).

PURPOSE

The purpose of the 16 South Corridor Development Plan, hereafter referred to as the “Plan”, is to: (1) review previously adopted/accepted plans relative to the Plan area, (2) develop a set of goals based upon applicable principles and recommendations in the Sherrills Ford and Balls Creek SAP , and (3) prepare a series of Plan Action Strategies (PASs) with measurable outcomes, timelines and relevant agreements. See the Plan Action Strategy (PASs) Legend at the end of this chapter and each Plan Action Strategy (PASs) table at the end of their respective chapters. The legend explains the symbols, prioritization, and timelines associated with each PASs. The appendix also has a consolidated PASs table for convenience. The plans described in the *Background* section are still valid and serve as the foundation for this Plan.

More specifically, the Plan addresses a series of issues focusing upon:

- A smaller geographic area than what was previously defined within the Sherrills Ford and Balls Creek SAPs;
- The coordination of utilities between Catawba County and Lincoln County through a signed agreement with defined boundaries;
- An improved multi-modal transportation network;
- A more defined development approach for the NC 150/NC 16 Bypass interchange and the Anderson Mountain Little Mountain Airport;
- Identifying a proposed small scale industrial park centered around the Little Mountain Airport with a focus upon aerospace, technology, and transportation industries; and
- Modifying land use regulations and design standards.

PLAN AREA

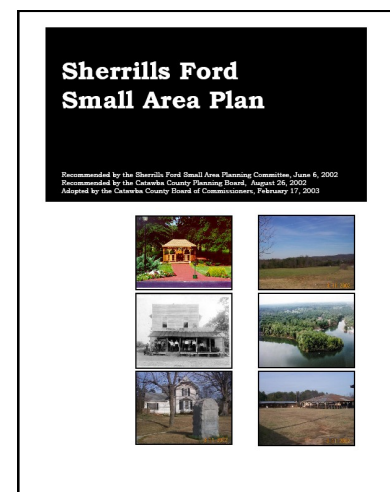
The Plan Area includes the land centered around existing NC 16 and NC 16 Bypass and is bounded on the north by Mountain Creek, on the west by portions of Airport Road, Anderson Mountain Road, and Lebanon Church Road, on the south by the Catawba-Lincoln county line, and on the east by a boundary line extending from the County line in a northerly direction to Mt. Beulah Road then further northward on Little Mountain Road with its intersection of Mountain Creek. The boundary for the Plan is depicted on *Map 1: Plan Area*. *Note: All maps referenced in the Plan document are located at the end of the relevant chapter.*

BACKGROUND

As noted in the *Introduction* above, two plans have been adopted/accepted which include components relative to the NC 16 corridor. Following is an overview of those plans and key components, several of which are incorporated into this Plan.

SHERRILLS FORD SMALL AREA PLAN (2003) - This plan is one of seven plans prepared for the unincorporated areas of the County resulting from the County's Long Range Strategic Growth Plan. The small area plan addresses a host of recommendations some of which are listed below:

- Land Use and Community Design
 - ◊ Designate a “regional commercial center” at the intersection of the existing Hwy. 150/16 and the new Hwy. 150/16 interchange. The regional commercial center is designed to provide a mixture of uses such as commercial, office-institutional and multi-family to serve the needs of a population service district of 40,000 – 150,000 people within a 20-30 minute drive. Development of this center would be coordinated with Lincoln County. The average size of a commercial center development would be 150,000 square feet of leasable area on an individual site greater



than 10 acres.

- ◇ Designate office-institutional uses to be allowed in the Hwy. 150 corridor, the Hwy. 150/16 regional commercial center.

- Transportation

- ◇ Rewrite the County Thoroughfare Plan immediately and update the Plan every 3 – 5 years.
- ◇ Depending on the Highway 150 and Hwy. 16 Feasibility Study results, implement measures to protect and preserve enough right-of-way for widening (or relocation). This may include land acquisition by the County or density bonuses.
- ◇ Explore mass transit connection with Mooresville and the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) when the Iredell County extension develops. This may include smaller shuttle buses or van pools. *(Consideration should also be given to a similar approach with Denver and CATS along Highway 16.)*
- ◇ When roads and highways are resurfaced, add additional pavement to accommodate the construction of bicycle lanes along Highway 150.
- ◇ Pursue funding for the Highway 150 at NC 16 “gateway” improvements.

- Public Services and Community Facilities

- ◇ Coordinate with school facility planners to review potential sites for new schools.
- ◇ As new school facilities are constructed, locate them contiguous to one another in order to allow for shared facilities, such as ball fields, media centers, etc.
- ◇ In order to support the land use recommendations contained within this plan, there is a need for public water and sewer on a regional basis.

- Economic Development

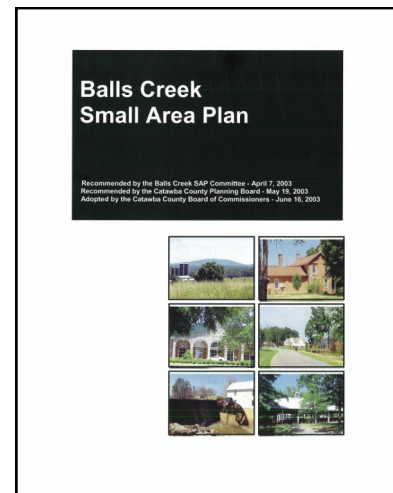
- ◇ Industrial uses in the Little Mountain Airport area are encouraged to develop in a park-like manner.
- Natural Resources
 - ◇ Establish voluntary agricultural districts as a means of protecting the rights of farmers to continue to farm.

BALLS CREEK SMALL AREA PLAN (2003) –This plan is also one of seven plans prepared for the unincorporated areas of the County resulting from the County’s Long Range Strategic Growth Plan. The small area plan addresses a host of recommendations some of which are listed below:



Little Mountain Airport

- Land Use and Community Design
 - ◇ Pursue a high quality business park along the Highway 16 corridor near Highway 150.
 - ◇ Develop a mechanism for preservation of open space resources by creating voluntary agricultural districts and conservation easements.
- Transportation
 - ◇ Increase pavement width to the maximum extent feasible on East Maiden Road from the new four-lane NC Highway 16 west to the intersection of Lebanon Road.
 - ◇ Explore possible local scenic highway designation for East Maiden Road.
 - ◇ Increase pavement width to the maximum extent feasible along the following roads for bicycle routes:
 - ⇒ Balls Creek Road
 - ⇒ East Maiden Road
 - ◇ Encourage and promote ridesharing/vanpooling to Charlotte through the Piedmont Wagon and the Charlotte Area Transit Systems.





*Greenway Transit
(Former Piedmont Wagon)*

- ◇ Encourage Piedmont Wagon to schedule trips to coordinate with the Western North Carolina passenger rail service.

- Community Facilities and Public Services

- ◇ Explore funding options for construction of school facilities.
- ◇ Catawba County should revisit the EMS study to see if recent residential development in the Balls Creek area warrants additional consideration for an EMS base in the area, with a special focus on locating such a facility within proximity of the schools.

- Economic Development

- ◇ Business development, including new development along the widened NC Highway 16 Corridor, should observe the following appearance and design criteria:
 - ⇒ landscaped areas along road frontage,
 - ⇒ limitation on size of signs,
 - ⇒ driveway cuts – interconnectivity.
- ◇ Pursue a high-quality, attractive office-institutional business park along the NC 16 Corridor near NC Highway 150.

- Natural Resources

- ◇ Establish standards for new development on Anderson Mountain above the 1,100 foot elevation in the area designated as “Mountain Protection District”. All new major subdivisions will be subject to a planned development process which will address the following:

- ⇒ lot clearing limits based on percent slope;
- ⇒ height restrictions;
- ⇒ building material and finishes of homes and signage to be compatible with the natural environment;
- ⇒ environmentally sensitive road and lot



Bandy's Fire Station #2

configurations; and

⇒ the average density allowable is one unit per two acres. To minimize the impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, the transferring of densities within the development will be strongly encouraged. Partner with municipalities to provide utilities consistent with adopted land use plans and smart growth principles.



Anderson Mountain

- ◇ Encourage residential subdivisions to follow design criteria for preserving trees within subdivisions.
- ◇ Work through county, state and federal agencies to expand educational efforts to farms about voluntary agricultural districts to preserve their farmland and their livelihood.

PROCESS

The Plan was drafted by the Catawba County Planning staff with technical assistance from the following:

- Catawba County Utilities and Engineering
- Catawba County GIS
- Western Piedmont Council of Governments
- Economic Development Commission
- NCDOT
- Cooperative Extension
- Catawba County Schools
- Catawba County Historical Association



Street Tree Preservation

upon completion of a draft Plan, the County Planning Department met with the above referenced technical committee to review maps, recommendations and implementation strategies. At this meeting,

With consensus of the plan by the technical review committee, the Plan was presented to the public at a meet-

ing on December XX. Approximately XX citizens attended this meeting to provide feedback on the plan recommendations and implementation strategies. Additionally, the Planning Board conducted a public hearing on the plan at its _____ meeting. XX people spoke to the plan. The Planning Board recommended the Plan to the Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners similarly conducted a public hearing on the plan at its _____ meeting. XX people spoke to the plan. The Board discussed the plan and accepted the plan as presented.

